

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 1, 2010. Claims 17 to 24 are pending in the application, of which Claims 17, 19, 21 and 22 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested.

Claims 17 to 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,956,665 (Miyahara) further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,348,971 (Owa) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,924,906 (Schwier). Claims 18 to 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyahara, Owa, Schwier and further in view of U.S. Pub. 2002/0093680 (Tanaka). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

The present claims concern assigning a plurality of pages ordered by a print order to at least one print device of a designated type. In one aspect of the claims, where a first judging unit judges that the print order does not include information indicating that a same tint is to be used for color printing, and a second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of a designated type exist in a print system, the plurality of pages of the color printing is assigned to the plurality of print devices of the designated type to be printed in parallel. However, where the first judging unit judges that the print order includes information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing, the plurality of pages is assigned to a selected single print device of the designated type.

Turning to specific claim language, independent Claim 19 is directed to a print control apparatus which is connected with a plurality of print devices. The print

control apparatus comprises an acquiring unit configured to acquire in a print order, the print order including information indicating whether a same tint is to be used for color printing and information designating a type of a print device for the color printing, an assigning unit configured to assign a plurality of pages ordered by the print order to at least one print device of the designated type, a first judging unit configured to judge whether or not the print order includes information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing, and a second judging unit configured to judge whether a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in a print system. The print control apparatus further comprises a selecting unit configured to select a single print device of the designated type, in case where the first judging unit judges that the print order includes the information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing and the second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system, and wherein the selecting unit does not select a single print device of the designated type if the first judging unit judges that the print order does not include the information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing even in case where the second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system, and wherein the assigning unit, in case where the first judging unit judges that the print order does not include the information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing and the second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system, assigns the plurality of pages of the color printing to the plurality of print devices of the designated type so that the plurality of pages are printed by the plurality of print devices in parallel, and wherein the assigning unit, in case

where the first judging unit judges that the print order includes the information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing, assigns the plurality of pages to the selected single print device of the designated type so that all the plurality of pages are serially printed by the selected single print device, even if the second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references, namely Miyahara, Owa, Schwier and Tanaka, whether considered alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of the present claims. In particular, the cited references fail to disclose or suggest at least the features of a first judging unit configured to judge whether or not a print order includes information indicating that a same tint is to be used for color printing, and a second judging unit configured to judge whether a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in a print system, and wherein the assigning unit, in case where the first judging unit judges that the print order does not include information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing and the second judging unit judges that the plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system, assigns the plurality of pages of a color printing to the plurality of print devices of the designated type so that the plurality of pages are printed by the plurality of print devices in parallel, and wherein the assigning unit, in case where the first judging unit judges that the print order includes the information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing, assigns the plurality of pages to a selected single print device of the designated type so that all the plurality of pages are serially printed by the selected single print device, even if the

second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system.

In the Office Action, it is conceded that Miyahara and Owa fail to disclose or suggest a print order including information indicating color printing or monochrome printing and information designating a type of print device, and a judging unit configured to judge whether or not the print order indicates color printing or monochrome printing and so as to print the plurality of print pages in parallel by the plurality of print devices, dispersively, when the plurality of print devices in the type designated in the print order exist in the print system and said judging unit judges that the print order does not indicate color, indicates monochrome printing and designated in the print order so as to print the plurality of print pages by only the single color print device, together, when the plurality of color print devices in the type designated in the print order exist in the print system.

However, the Office Action states at page 5 that Schwier discloses such a feature.

Applicants respectfully disagree. Furthermore, Applicants also submit that Schwier fails to disclose or suggest a first judging unit configured to judge whether or not a print order includes information indicating that the same tint is to be used for color printing, and a second judging unit configured to judge whether a plurality of print devices of a designated type exist in a print system, wherein an assigning unit, in case where the first judging unit judges that the print order does not include information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing and the second judging unit judges that the plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in a print system, assigns the plurality of pages of a color printing to the plurality of print devices of the designated type so that the plurality of

pages are printed by the plurality of print devices in parallel, and wherein the assigning unit, in case where the first judging unit judges that the print order includes the information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing, assigns the plurality of pages to a selected single print device of the designated type so that all the plurality of pages are serially printed by the selected single print device, even if the second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system.

Applicants submit that Schwier discloses a print server which receives print data. The print server subdivides the print data of a print job into data groups based on parameters of the print job. The data of a data group is then transmitted to a printer device, which is allocated to the respective group, to be printed. See Schwier column 2, lines 37 to 60.

In contrast, as recited in Claim 19, where a first judging unit judges that a print order does not include information indicating that a same tint is to be used for color printing and a second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of a designated type exist in a print system, a plurality of pages of the color printing are assigned to the plurality of print devices of the designated type so that the plurality of pages are printed by the plurality of print devices in parallel, and where the first judging unit judges that the print order includes the information indicating that the same tint is to be used for the color printing, the plurality of pages are assigned to a selected single print device of the designated type so that all the plurality of pages are serially printed by the selected single print device, even if the second judging unit judges that a plurality of print devices of the designated type exist in the print system.

Applicants have reviewed the remaining reference, namely Tanaka, and submit that nothing in Tanaka is found to disclose or suggest that which is missing from Miyahara, Owa and Schwier.

In light of the deficiencies of the cited references as discussed above, Applicants submit that amended independent Claim 19 is in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Amended independent Claims 17, 21, and 22 are directed to a system, a method and a computer-readable storage medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 19. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 17, 21, and 22 are also in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

CONCLUSION

No claim fees are believed due; however, should it be determined that additional claim fees are required, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted

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